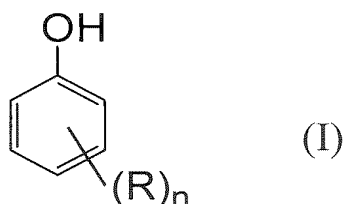


IN THE CLAIMS:

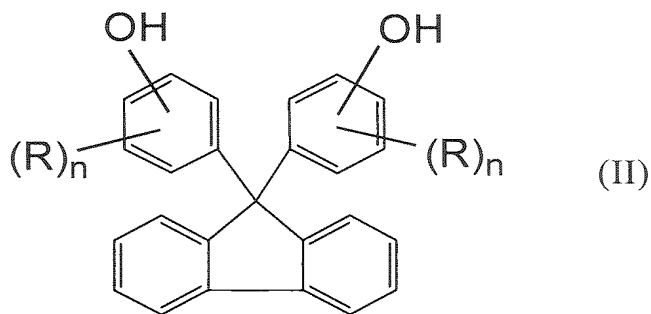
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (*Currently amended*): A method for producing a fluorene derivative, which comprises subjecting fluorenone and a phenolic compound represented by the formula (I):



wherein R represents an alkyl group, an alkoxy group, an aryl group or a cycloalkyl group, and n denotes an integer of 0 to 4,

to a condensation reaction in coexistence with a mercaptocarboxylic acid and a 5 to 37% by weight hydrochloric acid aqueous solution to obtain a fluorene derivative represented by the formula (II):



wherein R and n have the same meanings as defined above, and

wherein the proportion (weight ratio) of the mercaptocarboxylic acid relative to hydrogen chloride contained in the 5 to 37% by weight hydrochloric acid aqueous solution [the mercaptocarboxylic acid/hydrogen chloride] is 1/0.1 to 1/3, and an extractant is added to the resulting condensation reaction mixture to distribute the object compound to the organic layer, and a crystallization solvent is added to the organic layer to crystallize the fluorene derivative.

2. (*Original*): A method according to claim 1, wherein the phenolic compound represented by the formula (I) comprises phenol or a C₁₋₄alkylphenol.

3. (*Original*): A method according to claim 1, wherein the phenolic compound represented by the formula (I) comprises a 2-C₁₋₄alkylphenol or a 3-C₁₋₄alkylphenol.

4. (*Canceled*).

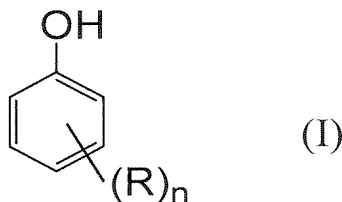
5. (*Currently amended*): A method according to claim 1, wherein the proportion (weight ratio) of fluorenone relative to the mercaptocarboxylic acid [fluorenone/the mercaptocarboxylic acid] is 1/0.01 to 1/0.5 ~~1/0.05 to 1/0.3, and the proportion (weight ratio) of the mercaptocarboxylic acid relative to hydrogen chloride contained in the hydrochloric acid [the mercaptocarboxylic acid/hydrogen chloride] is 1/0.3 to 1/2.~~

6. (*Canceled*).

7. (*Canceled*).

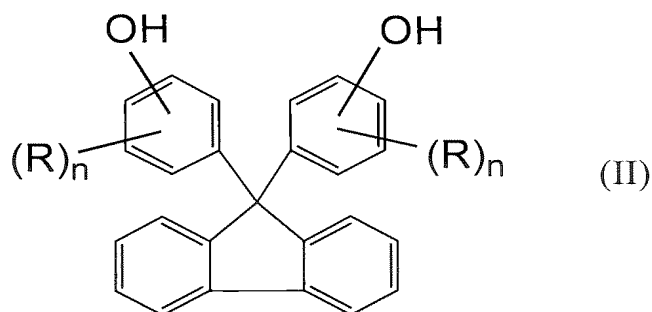
8. (*New*): A method according to claim 1, wherein the proportion (weight ratio) of fluorenone relative to the mercaptocarboxylic acid [fluorenone/the mercaptocarboxylic acid] is 1/0.05 to 1/0.3.

9. (*New*): A method for producing a fluorene derivative, which comprises subjecting fluorenone and a phenolic compound represented by the formula (I):



wherein R represents an alkyl group, an alkoxy group, an aryl group or a cycloalkyl group, and n denotes an integer of 0 to 4,

to a condensation reaction in coexistence with a thiol and a hydrochloric acid aqueous solution to obtain a fluorene derivative represented by the formula (II):



wherein R and n have the same meanings as defined above.

10. (*New*): A method according to claim 9, wherein the proportion of (weight ratio) thiol relative to hydrogen chloride contained in the hydrochloric acid aqueous solution [the thiol/hydrogen chloride] is 1/0.1 to 1/3.

11. (*New*): A method according to claim 10, wherein the proportion of (weight ratio) thiol relative to hydrogen chloride contained in the hydrochloric acid aqueous solution [the thiol/hydrogen chloride] is 1/0.3 to 1/2.

12. (*New*): A method according to claim 9, wherein the proportion of (weight ratio) fluorenone relative to thiol is 1/0.01 to 1/0.5.

13. (*New*): A method according to claim 12, wherein the proportion of (weight ratio) fluorenone relative to thiol is 1/0.05 to 1/0.3.

14. (*New*): A method according to claim 13, wherein the proportion of (weight ratio) fluorenone relative to thiol is 1/0.08 to 1/0.15.

15. (*New*): A method according to claim 9, wherein the concentration of the hydrochloric acid aqueous solution is 5 to 37% by weight.

16. (*New*): A method according to claim 15, wherein the concentration of the hydrochloric acid aqueous solution is 25 to 37% by weight.

17. (*New*): A method according to claim 16, wherein the concentration of the hydrochloric acid aqueous solution is 30 to 37% by weight.

18. (*New*): A method according to claim 9, wherein the thiol is a mercaptocarboxylic acid.

19. (*New*): A method according to claim 9, further comprising:
adding an extractant to the resulting condensation reaction mixture to distribute the object compound to the organic layer, and
adding a crystallization solvent to the organic layer to crystallize the fluorene derivative.

20. (*New*): A method for producing a 9,9-bis(4-hydroxy-3-C₁₋₄alkylphenyl)fluorene, which comprises subjecting fluorenone and a C₁₋₄alkylphenol to a condensation reaction in coexistence with β -mercaptopropionic acid and a hydrochloric acid aqueous solution to obtain the 9,9-bis(4-hydroxy-3-C₁₋₄alkylphenyl)fluorene.